

CHILD WELFARE SERVICES DISASTER RESPONSE PLAN TEMPLATE

County & Agency Name: LAKE COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES Date Completed: 1/15/2010

Name/Title: CAROL HUCHINGSON Telephone #: 707-995-4260
Person Managing/Overseeing Emergency Plan Implementation

E-mail Address: carol@dss.co.lake.ca.us

This template is intended to be used as a guide to help counties incorporate the 2006 federal disaster response criteria as part of local child welfare plans. Minors in the probation system must also be included in the plan. County plans must be amended to include Child Welfare Services (CWS) Disaster Response Plans and be operational by September 28, 2007.

In September 2006, Congress passed the Child and Family Services Improvement Act of 2006 (Public Law (PL) 109-288). PL 109-288 amended Part B of Title IV of the Social Security Act to reauthorize the Promoting Safe and Stable Families Program. Among other changes, PL 109-288 established requirements for states on disaster planning in child welfare under Section 6 (a) (16). Accordingly, counties are requested to address the following program areas in developing local disaster readiness plans.

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CWS Disaster Response Criteria A:	Identify, locate, and continue availability of services for children under State care or supervision who are displaced or adversely affected by a disaster:
Essential Function:	1. Identification and location process of children who may be displaced
Process Description:	The identity and location of all children in placement is available in the Child Welfare Services/Case Management System (CWS/CMS) computer. Additionally, the list is printed out biweekly and kept on file in the Lake County Department of Social Services (LCDSS) Child Welfare Services (CWS) office. If local computers and the hard copy were unavailable, the list can be reprinted from any CWS/CMS computer in another county or in Sacramento, where the CWS/CMS computer is maintained. Also, LCDSS maintains a listing of contacts for local FFAs and group homes.

	Probation placements (wards) are identified and located on the JUV CASE ACCESS computer system located at the Probation Department and at a separate location at Lake County Juvenile Hall. The lead placement officer will identify and locate wards. Also, all probation officers can access these records. If the computer system is inaccessible, identifying and contact information is available in the ward's paper file.
Essential Function:	2. Communication process with child care providers
Process Description:	Foster parents communicate directly with their child care providers. CWS has no oversight over child care providers.
Essential Function:	3. Identification of evacuation procedures – Event known in advance
Process Description:	CWS building evacuation plan is outlined in a written policy and procedures document, and staff participates in scheduled fire/emergency drills. The Lake County Office of Emergency Services (OES) has evacuation plans in place for the County; OES would coordinate an evacuation. For Probation wards placed in the County, the lead placement officer would contact the ward's care provider and could detain the ward in Juvenile Hall if needed. The lead placement worker will contact out of county care providers also to determine if evacuation is needed. If the lead placement officer cannot find care outside of the disaster area for the ward, the ward could be housed at Juvenile Hall, which has its own evacuation plans that would apply to any wards housed there.
Essential Function:	4. Identification of evacuation procedures – Event not known in advance
Process Description:	Same as item #3 above, and subject to any county or statewide directives.
Essential Function:	5. Identification of shelters
Process Description:	County OES is in charge of securing shelter sites for the County.
Essential Function:	6. Parental notification procedures
Process Description:	Social Workers will look up, either on-line or hard copy, contact information for the parents of dependent children in their caseloads. For probation wards, the lead placement officer will contact the parent or guardian of each ward as soon as possible. Parental contact information is in the computer or paper file. If the parent cannot be reached the lead placement officer will notify law

	enforcement in the area where the parent lives. If law enforcement is not available, the local OES coordinator will be contacted.
Essential Function:	7. Alternative processes for providing continued services
Process Description:	In an emergency where staff is unable to report to work, LCDSS policies provide for a skeleton crew (consisting of all managers, supervisors, analysts, the on-call social worker, and one office assistant) to provide immediate services. Probation has established procedures to work with neighboring counties. Protocols are established for all placement officers and their supervisors to receive emergency overtime in order to ensure services to children in placement.
Essential Function:	8. Staff assignment process
Process Description:	CWS staff members on the skeleton crew in item #7 are on notice that they are required to report to work in an emergency situation. Tasks will be assigned as needed, Probation's lead placement officer and supervisor may reassign work as needed. The placement supervisor, who does not carry a regular case load, may take on tasks if needed.
Essential Function:	9. Workload planning
Process Description:	Supervisors are in charge of dividing up workloads among staff in their units. Workers could be reassigned as needed to cover for staff that cannot be present. Supervisors could also perform social worker functions as needed.
Essential Function:	10. Alternative locations for operations
Process Description:	The CWS office is located 22 miles from the main LCDSS and Adult Services offices. CWS could operate out of either of those offices, both located in Lower Lake. Computer access and telephone service could be established at either location. Service Based Computing tokens issued by CDSS enable access from any remote locations with internet access, including laptops. Additionally, Lake and neighboring Mendocino counties are amenable to providing mutual assistance. The Probation Dept. can work out of the juvenile hall building if the probation building was inaccessible. Both are located in Lakeport. If both locations were inaccessible, Probation staff would work with neighboring counties to continue caring for wards.
Essential Function:	11. Orientation and ongoing training

Process Description:	All managers and supervisors attend disaster preparedness training presented by OES. Additional staff members have volunteered and been trained by Red Cross to perform emergency relief work. All probation officers are emergency service workers in the even of a disaster and receive training from OES.
CWS Disaster Response Criteria B:	Respond, as appropriate, to new child welfare cases in areas adversely affected by a disaster, and provide services in those cases:
Essential Function:	1. New child welfare investigation process
Process Description:	Investigations needing immediate attention would be worked by the on-call social worker or members of the skeleton crew as listed in item #7. if the CWS telephones were inoperable, staff would notify all local law enforcement agencies and coordinate with them to relay information to CWS to provide emergency services to children in need.
Essential Function:	2. Implementation process for providing new services
Process Description:	All social workers are trained, for purposes of being on call, to perform emergency investigations, and could be reassigned to that function if needed.
CWS Disaster Response Criteria C:	Remain in communication with caseworkers and other essential child welfare personnel who are displaced because of a disaster:
Essential Function:	1. Communication structure – staff
Process Description:	Ham radio operators have been designated and trained in each LCDSS office. Also, each location had battery operated two-way radios to enable communication with one another and with local law enforcement agencies if telephone service was inoperable. Also, all CWS social workers have county provided cell phones. Probation officers have use of cell phones and the emergency number for Juvenile Hall, which is listed on all placements contracts. If needed, officers can access the emergency radio system, per Department instructions, to contact dispatch and OES locally or in other counties.
Essential Function:	2. Communication structure – child welfare personnel (phone tree)
Process Description:	Lines of communication are clearly delineated within CWS. The Deputy Director oversees the Program Manager, who would call the supervisors, who would call the social workers in their units. Supervisors have contact info for each social worker's county assigned cell phone.

Essential Function:	3. Communication structure – contracted services
Process Description:	CWS contracts with an answering service, which has the number if the on-call social worker at all times when the office is closed. CWS contracts with a local FFA for emergency foster care and maintains contact information (land line, cell phone, and e-mail) for the director, assistant director, and all social workers of the FFA.
Essential Function:	4. Communication process when all normal channels are unavailable
Process Description:	LCDSS has four battery operated, two-way radios to keep the main LCDSS office in contact with satellite offices (CWS and Adult Services). Also, each of the three buildings have two staff persons trained in ham radio operation, as a means of enabling communication when phone lines are down.
Essential Function:	5. Communication frequency
Process Description:	Social workers contact clients regularly as required by law (usually monthly) and would continue to do so by whatever means available in the event of a disaster or emergency.
Essential Function:	6. Communication with media
Process Description:	OES has designated a county spokesperson from the County Administration Office. The LCDSS director or her designee is authorized to speak to the media regarding LCDSS operations and to provide information during or following a disaster.
Essential Function:	7. Communication with volunteers
Process Description:	Due the confidentiality requirements of CWS, volunteers are not employed. In a disaster situation that necessitated the use of volunteers, the LCDSS director or her designee would communication with them.
Essential Function:	8. Establishment of a toll-free number prior to disaster (include TTY)
Process Description:	The LCDSS CWS toll free number is 800-386-4090. TTY is available via the Telephone Relay Service, which is located out of county, and presumably would be functional in a disaster affecting Lake County.

CWS Disaster Response Criteria D:	Preserve essential program records:
Essential Function:	1. Record preservation process
Process Description:	In addition to saving all computer generated work in CWS/CMS, hard copies of essential documents are kept in the paper file. All documents filed in court are preserved court files. A case's essential documents could be reconstructed as needed.
Essential Function:	2. Use of off-site back-up system
Process Description:	The CWS/CMS back-up is located in Sacramento. Paper files are located in the LCDSS CWS office. The courthouse, located several blocks from CWS, houses all court files.
CWS Disaster Response Criteria E:	Coordinate services and share information with other states:
Essential Function:	1. Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children reporting process
Process Description:	The social worker supervisor who serves as the LCDSS ICPC coordinator handles all communication for out of state placements. The ICPC Coordinator would share information with his contacts in other states where Lake County dependent children are placed. Those contacts, working with the LCDSS ICPC coordinator, would handle contacts with the organizations listed in item 2-7 below.
Essential Function:	2. Mental health providers
Process Description:	Lake County Mental Health Dept. is located less than one mile from the CWS office. The departments communicate via phone, e-mail, and in-person meetings.
Essential Function:	3. Courts
Process Description:	The courthouse is located less than a mile from the CWS office. Thus, even if telephone and e-mail were non-functional, in person communication would be possible in most situations.
Essential Function:	4. Federal partners
Process Description:	Lake County has no direct partnerships on the federal level. These are handled by CDSS.

Essential Function:	5. CDSS
Process Description:	Lake County's CDSS representative/consultant is Mary Ellen Borba. She maintains contact by telephone and e-mail.
Essential Function:	6. Tribes
Process Description:	Of the six local tribes, five have ICWA representatives. Through regular meetings, CWS has established good relations with the ICWA reps and other tribal leaders. CWS maintains contact information for all tribes and for a tribal expert witness. One of the local tribes coordinates Differential Response for tribal families and maintains separately located tribal TANF, medical services, and other offices.
Essential Function:	7. Volunteers
Process Description:	Currently, no volunteers work with CWS. If an emergency situation required help from volunteers, communication with them would be handled by the LCDSS director or her designee, who could delegate responsibility to staff as needed.